

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Page 1, immediately following the title "IMPROVING POLYNUCLEOTIDE LIGATION REACTIONS," please insert the following paragraph:

This application is a U.S. National Phase Application pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 371 of International Application No. PCT/GB2005/000225, which was filed January 21, 2005, claiming benefit of priority of Great Britain Patent Application No. 0401525.1, which was filed January 23, 2004, and U.S. Patent Application No. 60/560,336, which was filed April 6, 2004. The entire disclosure of each of the foregoing applications is incorporated herein by reference.

Page 11, immediately after claim 6, please insert a new page containing the following abstract of the application:

ABSTRACT

The method of the invention improves the specificity of a ligation reaction carried out between a first double-stranded polynucleotide having a single-stranded portion and a second polynucleotide having a complementary single-stranded portion, the second polynucleotide being present in a sample comprising a mixture of different polynucleotides. The method comprises contacting the sample, under hybridising conditions, with the first polynucleotide and one or more third polynucleotide(s) wherein the third polynucleotide(s) comprises a single-stranded portion that differs from the single-stranded portion of the first polynucleotide by at least one base substitution.